



Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115301
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290196
Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ruth Frith

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chase Lane
School category	Community		Dovercourt, Dovercourt
Age range of pupils	3–11		Harwich, Essex CO12 4NB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01255502416
Number on roll (school)	394	Fax number	01255241907
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr P Harvey
		Headteacher	Mrs D Carter
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007	Inspection number 290196
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size school situated in the Dovercourt district of the town of Harwich. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is above average. Many, but not all, children enter school with standards that are below those expected for their age. Children's standards in communication, language and literacy and their social development are particularly weak. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few speak English as an additional language. There is a higher than average percentage of pupils leaving or joining the school during their primary education.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which rightly commands the confidence of parents. Numbers have increased significantly over recent years and reasons for this are echoed in parents' comments; 'Chase Lane is a wonderful school ... the change in the school is remarkable ... The Family Support Centre is excellent'.

Staff are successful at creating a friendly and supportive environment in which pupils do well. Care, guidance and support are good and help pupils to feel safe and develop confidence as they progress through the school. Pupils' personal and social development is also good and is reflected in their good behaviour, relationships and attitudes to learning.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well so that by the time they leave school, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. To some extent, the average standards in English mask the lower levels of writing in relation to reading. The low levels of speech and language some pupils have on entry to school make it more difficult for them to use a wide range of vocabulary in their work, spell correctly or attain the higher levels in writing. Progress in the Foundation Stage is good because staff work hard to extend children's personal and social development as well as their early literacy and numeracy skills. Consequently, children quickly settle and want to learn. Teaching and learning are good and staff have made considerable efforts to provide an enjoyable and engaging curriculum for all pupils. Good emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils who have learning difficulties make good progress.

Leadership and management are good. This has resulted in significant improvements since the last inspection in behaviour, attendance, teaching, learning, curriculum and resources. The school has the capacity for further improvement and recognises that the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders need clarifying. Good self-evaluation procedures have helped staff and governors to gain a clear understanding of the school's strengths and identify appropriate priorities for improvement. However, although the school collects information about pupil progress, this is not yet used effectively to set targets. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by placing more emphasis on developing pupils' speech and language and by ensuring that more pupils reach the higher levels.
- Make better use of the information collected on pupils' progress and attainment in order to more sharply focus on those areas which would bring about improvements in standards.
- Review the work of senior and middle managers so that tasks are more specific and effective.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From below average starting points pupils make good progress and achieve well. Staff build on the children's early successes in the Nursery and Reception, and the results of the Year 2 national assessments show that pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. A high percentage of pupils enter school with poor speech and language. Although generally good progress is made throughout Key Stage 2, the legacy of this can be seen, particularly in pupils' writing as they try to move away from using more simple words and start to write complex sentences.

Although the standards reached by pupils are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school, they are lower in English, particularly in writing. Here, not enough pupils are gaining the higher levels. Checks of pupils' work indicate that progress in Key Stage 2 is good, but the significant number of pupils entering or leaving the school during this period has a negative effect on some pupils' progress over time. The school did not meet its targets last year because they were unrealistic. Different groups of pupils generally make similar progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is a friendly and safe environment in which pupils show respect towards each other and the staff. Behaviour is good and pupils are enthusiastic about their school. Pupils value the commendations and praise they receive for hard work, service to the school and good behaviour. The school is doing what it can to improve attendance but the attendance rate is only satisfactory.

Pupils are increasingly conscious of adopting healthy lifestyles and take part in a range of sporting activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are sensitive towards the feelings of others, and appreciative of the world around them. They correspond with schools in Ghana and communities in Rwanda. There are many opportunities for reflection and singing in assembly. Pupils regularly raise money for charities such as Children in Need and Red Nose Day. Pupils are enterprising and each class invests money in order to raise funds for class activities. They value the opportunity to share their ideas for improvement through the school council and were involved in the development of the bicycle sheds. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and develop good personal qualities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have confidence in what they need to do to raise standards and in their subject knowledge. Lessons are usually planned in detail, conducted with good control and make effective use of resources

to stimulate interest. Warm relationships and good classroom organisation usually enable a brisk pace of work. Learning is supported well for most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, through good support from teachers and teaching assistants. The teachers respond to pupils' work with helpful encouragement and advice. Increasingly, they provide homework and practical targets to improve pupils' attainment. There are, nevertheless, times when learning is less effective, particularly when teaching is too slow and pupils lose concentration. Learning is also restricted when too little time is given for the pupils to develop their understanding through talk. The development of pupils' writing is not supported consistently enough by the use of good examples in classroom displays. Not all lessons meet the wide range of pupils' needs, particularly those of the more capable pupils in English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is using the literacy and numeracy strategies well to raise standards but the curriculum is not fully effective in developing pupils' writing. Staff have been successful in encouraging reading through schemes such as the 'Yearly Book Journey' and linking the commendation system to book rewards. The use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning is a developing strength of the school.

The international school award recognises the increasing opportunities for cross curricular work, including Africa week. The school emphasises creativity across the curriculum through art and music. Many pupils take instrumental lessons and all Year 4 pupils now have the chance to learn a brass instrument over the next two years. The school has worked closely with the local secondary school to enhance the provision in modern languages. All pupils study French and German and many learn Spanish and Dutch as additional activities. Gifted and talented pupils are well provided for through additional activities in mathematics, music and sport.

The breadth of extra-curricular provision supports pupils well and adds considerable enjoyment to their school experience. Sporting activities are enhanced by the additional facilities of the 'astroturf' and the swimming pool. The school is well supported by local football, rugby and hockey clubs. Educational visits and the Year 6 residential trip make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The staff provide strong support for the pupils through their day-to-day care, well-informed guidance and clear commitment to inclusion. A programme of personal, social and health education builds pupils' understanding of important topics including safety and health. Teachers supervise the pupils well and encourage sensitive and helpful attitudes and relationships. A family centre on the school site provides a haven, specialist counselling and close support for pupils and parents and carers who need help. Risk assessments are made for visits and other activities and suitable attention is paid to checks on adults to safeguard the

pupils' welfare. Responsibilities for child protection are mainly defined well, though training for the staff is now due. The attentiveness of staff and the good behaviour of pupils create a climate in which learners can thrive. However, the school is not making full use of information about pupils' attainment to create and maintain challenging targets for higher attainment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school effectively focuses on promoting pupils' personal development and well-being and improving standards. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She has encouraged interest and innovation amongst staff and secured additional funding which has resulted in a stimulating, attractive and well maintained school. In addition, the school has received national awards for its work and has also become a centre for training teachers. Following recent restructuring of leadership and management, the school recognises the need to review the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle managers to ensure further improvement. In particular, there is a need to improve the use of information gained about pupils' progress and attainment to raise standards further, particularly at Key Stage 2. The views of all members of the school community are taken into account and acted upon. The effective governing body acts as a critical friend and regularly checks the work of the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

17 January 2007

Dear Children

Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery, Chase Lane, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex, CO12 4NB

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about the work you have done. We were pleased to hear that you enjoy school and could talk enthusiastically about all the good things that are happening there. These are some of the best things about your school.

- You work hard and do well, particularly in reading, mathematics and science.
- You are enthusiastic and are keen to do good work.
- The staff enjoy teaching you and the teaching is good.
- You behave well and, when working and playing together, you are kind to each other.
- The activities you do and the things you study are interesting which helps to make lessons fun.
- Your school looks good and is well cared for.
- Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school.

The school is continuing to improve because of the work of Mrs Carter, the staff and governors. We have agreed that things will get even better if the staff help you to improve your writing. We are also asking them to look at how the school is managed so that everyone knows what they should do and how they should use the information they have about your progress to ensure that you reach even higher standards.

We left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well in the future.

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector